

Effects of Teaching Self-Management Techniques 1

The Use of Self-Management Skills with Kindergarten Through Third Grade Students
with Emotional and Behavior Disorders: Investigation of Findings

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Abstract

Teaching self-management strategies to students with emotional behavior disorders is important in improving on-task behavior in the classroom. The problem in teaching students with emotional behavior disorders is that they often have trouble staying on task or staying focused, which causes disruption of the class. The purpose of the study is to link the positive effects of self-management strategies to on-task behavior of students with emotional behavior disorders.

A review of the literature reveals that the use of self-management strategies increases the on-task behavior of students with emotional behavior disorders. A secondary effect of using these techniques was an increase in academic performance in reading and mathematics.

In conclusion, teachers should be trained in teaching these strategies as a method to integrate students with emotional behavior disorders in the classroom. By teaching these methods both teachers and students may have a better academic experience in the classroom, as compared to typical unsuccessful experiences reported in the literature.

Introduction

Two years ago I worked with a first grade boy that was identified as being emotionally and behaviorally disturbed (EBD). He refused to do most activities by throwing, tearing up, or crossing out his work. He also threw violent tantrums and disturbed the entire class. As a result I reached for my file on self-management techniques and created a behavior plan for this student. I created a plan, which taught this student how to recognize, respond to, and correct his own disruptive behavior.

My research exemplifies the fact that most teachers have taught at least one student who is diagnosed as severely emotionally disturbed (SED) or exhibits another behavior disorder (BD). Findings expound on the fact that there is an increase in the number of mainstreamed students who are diagnosed with emotional behavior disorders (EBD) and that teachers are not always trained to deal with these types of special needs. Studies (Carter, 1993; see also Cartledge & Levendoski, 2000; DiGangi, Maag, & Rutherford 1991) however, reveal the success of teaching self-management techniques to students with EBD as a positive method for increasing social and academic integration.

Statement of Problem

The problem with the integration of EBD students is that teachers are not adequately trained to work with these EBD students. In the wake of Public Law 94-142 (Johnson & MacAuley, 1993), which identified the least restrictive environment as a regular education classroom, the education field was asked to include students with various disorders as added members to individual classroom communities. Within this context teachers are faced with a new set of challenges when designing and implementing

curriculum along with classroom management strategies. According to Johnson and MacAuley (1993) students with EBD are seen as the least desired students to work with. The behaviors EBD students' exhibit are sometimes unmanageable by the untrained overburdened staff. As a result of this sudden influx of EBD students there is a decided lack of training and or behavior programs in place to adequately integrate such high needs students.

There are many variables that affect the success of mainstreaming EBD students. Within the context of Public Law 42-142 initiative there is a constant debate on the efficacy of placing students with behavior disorders and other disabilities in the classroom. Cartledge and Johnson (1996) look into the variables, which effect mainstreaming. These authors also highlight the fact that through behavior modifications programs, such as teaching self-management strategies, students with disabilities can have a successful classroom experience. Cartledge and Levendoski (2000) delve deeper into this topic by highlighting a study in which EBD students are taught self-monitoring strategies to help increase their on-task behavior. Other authors (Kim & Sugai, 1995; Johnson & MacAuley, 1993) also demonstrate the success of self-management techniques for increasing on-task behavior.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: In what capacity does the use of self-management skills improve on-task behavior of kindergarten through third grade students that exhibit emotional behavior disorders? For the purpose of this study self-management is defined as a process by which an individual monitors, evaluates, and

adapts their own behavior to meet the expectations of the situation in the classroom. The studies in this paper express viable implementation of self-management skills within a full inclusion classroom. I show the context of how behavioral self-management came to light as a technique and theory that has been used with different types of behavior disorders over time.

Research Question

Is teaching self-management skills to students with emotional behavior disorders a viable means to improve on-task behavior within a full inclusion elementary classroom? Within the context of improving on-task behavior is their increase in academic performance? Along with these two questions is a secondary connection, which investigates the idea that teachers must also be trained to teach self-management skills to students with emotional behavior disorders.

Theoretical Rationale

The idea of teaching self-management techniques as a way to increase on-task behavior grew out of the theory on behavioral self-control (BSC). As cited in McDougall's (1998) review, the first rationale behind behavioral self-control came out of B.F. Skinner's study on the connection of science to human behavior. By adapting B.F. Skinner's ideas Glynn, Shee, and Thomas (1973) were able to break behavioral self-control into a four-component system. Through the theory of BSC, teachers can create a

system in which learners controls their own behavior allowing the teacher to implement the curriculum.

Assumptions

My assumption is that teaching-self management techniques to students with emotional behavior disorders improves individual's on-task behavior in the classroom. Through proper teacher training, teachers can successfully implement these types of techniques.

Background and Need

Public Law 94-142 required the least restrictive environment for all students. This mandate has changed the make up of classroom communities to include students with EBD. The initial implementation of mainstreaming did not go smoothly and often resulted in the creation of a poor learning environment for all. Teachers often did not know how to integrate or work with students who exhibited EBD, and many teachers today are still not trained on working with these disorders. There is a need for adequate teacher training and an understanding on the usefulness of self-management techniques being implemented into the classroom. Several studies (Carter, 1993; Cartledge & Levendoski, 2000; DiGangi, Maag, & Rutherford, 1991; Hilt, Ringdahl, & Sterling-Turner, 2001) examine the use of self-management skills to improve the on-task behavior of EBD students with positive results as a means of transitioning these students into the classroom.

Review of the Literature

The reviewed literature reveals the current supported practices for students who have emotional and behavior disorders. Furthermore, the literature reports that EBD students show an increase in on-task behavior and academic performance when taught self-management skills. Teaching self-management skills to EBD students is accomplished in two different contexts. The first context being a one-on-one setting in which EBD students are treated in a self-contained classroom or a resource room. The second context is the teaching of self-management techniques for students in a full inclusion classroom. The literature also reveals the two current issues facing the consistent implementation of self-management techniques in the classroom, a) the need for teacher training, b) the generalization and maintenance of self-management programs. Lastly the review explores the implications for future studies on the topic of self-management in the classroom.

Current Practices in Teaching EBD Students

Hudson, Johnson, Lewis, and Richter (2004) reveal the current supported practices of teaching students with emotional and behavior disorders. Through rigorous criteria, Hudson et al. (2004) determined the current scientific supported practices in the field of teaching EBD students. The first supported practice is teacher praise and reinforcement. Research indicates an increase in student engagement when there is a high rate of teacher praise. Another supported practice includes opportunities for students to respond during instruction. Hudson, et al. (2004) conclude that disruptive behavior is

often linked to student disconnect to the lesson. With proper opportunities to respond students will exhibit less disruptive behavior. Lastly positive behavioral support is a broad topic that expresses several supported practices when teaching EBD students.

Positive behavioral support includes; functional behavioral assessment-based interventions, social skills instruction/teaching desired replacement behavior, self-management, and a school-wide system of positive behavior support. These four strategies are used in both self-contained and full inclusion classroom settings.

Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is based on a formative behavior assessment that targets student problem behavior and then implements a plan to decrease the targeted behavior. Culpepper, Kamps, and Wendland (2006) conducted a FBA study on the connection between teacher participation in assessment for students with emotional behavior disorders and success of the intervention.

Social skills instruction is another proven strategy when working with EBD students. Specific goal behavior instruction often helps engage EBD students in internalizing and externalizing their behavior. According to Ager and Cole (1991) social skills instruction leads to an increase in prosocial behavior and student on-task behavior.

Along with FBA and social skills instruction, self-management programs are another effective strategy to use with EBD students. Self-management programs often incorporate two or more strategies including but not limited to self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and positive reinforcement. These strategies have been used with populations of students from preschool to high school levels (Fox & Garrison, 2003; DiGangi, Maag, & Rutherford, 1991).

Hudson et al. (2004) conclude that one of the most effective practices in teaching EBD students is a school that has a consistent system of positive behavior support (PBS). A school wide system of PBS helps promote, a reduction in the overall disruptive behavior for the entire school.

These are some of the research-supported practices highlighted by Hudson et al. (2004). These practices are highlighted in several leading articles that passed an effective practices review process.

EBD students in Self-contained Classrooms and Resource Rooms

Teaching self-management skills to EBD students within a self-contained classroom has proven successful in increasing students' on-task behavior. Cartledge and Levendoski (2000) conducted a study looking at the effects of self-monitoring for severely emotionally disturbed (SED) students. Self-monitoring is one venue of self-management and focuses on actively involving students in the learning process of managing their own behavior. The participants of the study included four boys diagnosed with SED who were enrolled in a self-contained classroom. The study took place during the student's math period. During the math period the observers measured two variables, (1) student time on task and (2) the percentage of math problems completed. Self-monitoring cards were given to the students and each student was asked to record his behavior after a ten-minute interval several times during a math period. The students were instructed to record their own behavior (with a happy face expressing on-task behavior or sad face, expressing off-task behavior) on a card that asked them the

question, am I on task at this moment. The self-monitoring procedure was conducted for 12 days.

After the study was complete the self-monitoring cards were phased out over the course of 10 days. As a result of the self-monitoring and cueing the participants showed an increase in overall on-task behavior. The participants also showed an increase in their overall productivity.

Self-monitoring is just one aspect of self-management. Kim and Sugai (1995) examine a study in which the participants were exposed to a combination of skills including, self-observation, self-evaluation, and self-recording. Seven primary students with emotional and behavior disorders participated in this study. They were between the ages of four and nine.

The students were divided into three treatment conditions: (a) self-evaluation, (b) self-observation, and (c) self-observation plus self-recording. The study included a five level design, (a) baseline data collection, (b) baseline with videotaping, (c) instruction, (d) intervention, and (e) follow-up.

During the baseline with videotaping portion of the study, student behavior was videotaped during math and language arts periods. Students were instructed separately for 20 minutes on each type of targeted disruptive behavior. The students who were in the self-observation plus-self recording group also received instruction on how to record their behavior.

The experiment was conducted at the beginning of each math or language arts class. The students were videotaped and then the last five minutes of the class was used for the self-observation process. The students in the self-evaluation group were asked to

mark their self-evaluation cards, which expressed how they best evaluated their own behavior during the class. Students in the self-observation group were asked to go into another room and watch a videotape to examine their behavior. The students in the self-observation, self-evaluation group were asked to watch the same video, but then record their disruptive behavior. No other discussion of the behavior took place for any of the students.

The overall success of the study was seen in the third group who experienced self-observation and self-evaluation. There was a significant decrease in the level of disruptive behavior for the self-observation and self-evaluation group, however, after the termination of the intervention, student's disruptive behavior returned to the baseline level.

The results of this study show support for the use of self-management strategies in the classroom as a means to reduce disruptive behavior. It exemplifies the important use of self-observation as a means for students to truly analyze appropriate classroom behavior as well as giving the teachers an opportunity to teach behavior lessons through viable examples.

Hilt, Kern, Ringdahl and Sterling-Turner (2001) present another prominent study discussing the link between self-management procedures and function analysis results. Hilt et al. (2001) examine a study of three boys in a pullout assessment program; Chip age 7, John age 8, and Mark age 4. All three boys were admitted for assessment and treatment of destructive, aggressive, and defiant behavior. The study took place in a large furnished room. The participants were observed in normal everyday activities for three to five days examining the amount of inappropriate and disruptive behavior. The functional

analysis showed that multiple functions caused the disruptive behavior. A function or behavior was targeted for change with each participant.

The intervention for Chip, John, and Mark consisted of a two-component self-management system. The first component of the intervention was to increase the desired behavior and the second component focused on teaching the appropriate alternative behavior that would allow the participant to receive appropriate reinforcement. A self-management recording sheet was developed for each participant that specifically addressed each participant's behavior goal with a yes or no column to record his individual behavior. Chip, John, and Mark also created a menu of items that they could earn for showing appropriate behavior. After a participant demonstrated a stated amount of appropriate behavior, the participant was able to choose one of the menu items as a reward. Students were also able to ask for breaks during tasks as a way to monitor their individual behavior.

The results of the study show that the participants exhibited a reduction in their individual targeted challenge behavior with increases in the alternative functional replacement behavior that was linked to appropriate behavior. Within the course of the study the replacement behavior was reinforced by praise along with delayed reinforcement. Chip, John, and Mark showed a significant increase in the amount of appropriate responses to situations and ability to monitor their own behavior by taking breaks when needed.

These studies examine current uses in teaching self-management skills to students through external resources of self-contained classrooms and pullouts. Each study mentioned above looks at a particular use of one or a combination of self-management

strategies that reduce the disruptive behavior of students with emotional and behavior disorders.

EBD Students in Inclusive Classrooms

McDougall (1998) conducted a comprehensive review of literature with the goal of identifying behavioral self-management (BSM) studies that were conducted in a general education classroom. With strict criteria in place, McDougall was able to identify fourteen articles out of two hundred forty-eight articles that represented the use of BSM techniques with learning disabled students. Of the fourteen examined studies only six of the populations had a behavior disorder participant. The results of the review revealed that BSM is being used in general education settings to reduce the occurrence of disruptive behavior in learning disabled students including students with emotional behavior disorders (EBD).

One example is a review by Culpepper, Kamps, and Wendland (2006), which examines the use of self-management strategies in an inclusive classroom. These authors look at a study with two, seven-year-old participants, Michael and Patricia, who show risk behavior problems and are at risk of developing emotional behavior disorders. Culpepper et al. (2006) examine a study, which uses functional behavior analysis (FBA), to determine teacher participation in the intervention plan for the two participants. After observation and collection of data two interventions are put into place.

Michael and Patricia's intervention consisted of two parts. One area of intervention was for group work and the other for individual work. The intervention included teacher praise and points during the participants' group instruction, limited

teacher acknowledgement of inappropriate behavior, and a lottery reinforcement system. During individual work Michael and Patricia were taught to use self-monitoring sheets to record their on-task and off-task behavior at 1-2 minute intervals. After recording a preset number of on-task behaviors on the self-recording sheet, the behavior was reinforced with lottery tickets.

The study shows improved behavior for both participants in both group and individual settings. The FBA process and teacher participation led to a positive intervention that could be reproduced and used in other classrooms.

In addition to this research, other studies and articles exemplify the use of various self-management techniques that can be implemented within the entire population of a mainstreamed classroom in the full inclusion context. The following literature represents effective self-management programs.

Smith (2002) discussed the use of cognitive behavioral intervention (CBI) to decrease the aggressive behaviors of students with EBD, which included a specific self-management technique. Through a program developed in 1991 by Susan Etscheidt, students are taught to use a sequential strategy to solve problems. Students were taught; (1) Stop and think, (2) identify the problem, (3) develop an alternative solution, (4) evaluate consequences, and (5) select and implement a solution. The students who participated in this study and received the CBI training showed a significant increase in self-control.

Fox and Garrison (2003) developed a "what works brief" describing the implementation steps of a self-management program. This article asks teachers specific questions on how to evaluate students' ability to monitor their own behavior as well as

how to identify observable behaviors that they want students to learn. Fox and Garrison's brief explains that once behavior is identified students are shown or given a way to record their on-task and off-task behavior. There is often a goal chart to insure that students received reinforcement for appropriate behavior. Students are taught to engage in appropriate behavior and to monitor individual behavior. It is the teacher's job to provide feedback and positive attention to the student. Fox and Garrison present this article as a means for teachers to implement self-management strategies in an inclusive classroom.

McDougall (1998), Culpepper et al. (2006), Smith (2002), and Fox and Garrison's (2003) articles and studies examine the use of self-management techniques in a general education setting. Each study or article discusses a different combination or method of self-management programs. Each article expresses a reduction in or method off reducing off-task or inappropriate behavior for students with EBD.

Issues with Implementation of Self-management Skills

The literature also reveals several issues with the implementation of self-management skills within the classroom. The literature discusses the two most prevalent issues facing implementation, which include teacher training and the generalization and maintenance of self-management programs.

Teacher Training

According to MacAuley and Johnson (1993) many teachers are ill equipped to deal with students who have emotional behavior disorders. The behaviors of students

who have EBD include but are not limited too, aggression, low impulse control, defiance and inadequate social skills. These behaviors often interfere with the academic instruction in the classroom.

Cartledge and Johnson (1996) also examine the lack of teacher preparation for teachers who have EBD students in the classroom. Even though teachers are required to take special education courses under the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCTAE), these courses do not prepare educators for every exceptional child he or she will encounter. When preparing for an EBD student, teachers need to understand the general characteristics of behavior disorders as well as the specific characteristics of the particular student. According to Cartledge and Johnson, it is unlikely that the general education teacher will be able to develop an integrated program for EBD students on their own, teachers must rely on assistance from special education teachers, administration, and other invested parties.

Hawthorne, Islam, Inner, and Prater (1997) through a survey of first year and veteran teachers and principals confirm the need for training. The results indicated that educational professionals feel a particular need for more extensive training in the areas of academic modifications and social behavior management. Hawthorne et al. (1997) address the concept that often ideas such as behavior modification are taught to targeted populations, such as special education, when these topics often relate and are essential for all teachers.

The literature exemplifies the need for teacher training as a result of special populations in a full inclusion classroom. The literature emphasizes the fact that self-management programs are proven means of modifying the behavior of an EBD student,

however, very few teachers are trained in these techniques or in the use of these programs.

Generalization and Maintenance of Self-Management Programs

The literature identifies several studies (Cartledge & Johnson, 1996; Cartledge & Levendoski, 2000; Culpepper, Kamps & Wendland, 2006) that show an increase in on-task behavior through a defined self-management program. The programs presented in the literature are studies conducted over a short period of time with no long-term evaluation. Carter (1993) discusses that even though there are numerous reasons to institute self-management programs there is limited research in the generalization or maintenance of the effects across different settings. Generalization and maintenance of a program is the ability of the changed behavior to maintain over time and within a variety of settings. Lochman, Mayer, and Van Acker (2005) concur that within the context of a behavior management program there is a lack of generalization or maintenance over time. These two articles conclude that future studies should look into the long-term effects of the proposed study.

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings in the literature reveal that teaching self-management skills to students with emotional behavior disorders is an effective method in reducing disruptive behavior and increasing on-task behavior. Through a systematic approach teachers can successfully change a target behavior.

The studies examine the process of implementing a self-management program with a particular target behavior. Teachers begin with an analysis of the behavior and a collection of data. The next step includes determining the behavior(s) which the teacher wishes to change. After the identification of the problem behavior, teachers work with the student teaching him or her the skills necessary to replace the problem behavior with an appropriate alternative. Along with this process the successful implementation of the program usually includes a way in which students can self-evaluate and record their own behavior. The research provides various examples of how self-management skills and programs are implemented in both pullout and full inclusion classrooms.

The research also emphasizes the importance of teacher preparation. Teaching students in inclusive classrooms has an effect on attention, behavior, and learning. Students with EBD provide numerous behavior challenges for teachers, affecting the ability of teachers to effectively cover important academic content. The literature promotes the training and collaboration of teachers who are faced with including EBD students into the classroom. Studies reveal that with proper training on targeting problem behavior, teachers can implement self-management programs that will help particular students as well as improve the classroom experience for both the teacher and student.

Additionally, the literature reveals that self-management is a broad topic incorporating a myriad of strategies that are tailored to meet the needs of individual students. The programs that have the most success include a combination self-observation and self-evaluation. The studies demonstrate that when students are taught how to recognize their own inappropriate behavior they have a greater ability to choose a more

appropriate replacement behavior. Through a combination of strategies students can learn to change their own behavior with proper modeling and a consistent program.

Limitations/Gaps in the Literature

There are numerous gaps in literature regarding research on teaching self-management skills to EBD students that are mainstreamed. Much of what was found in the research was one-on-one implementation of self-management programs in a pullout class or resource room. There is not much research on the effectiveness or use of self-management skills being taught in the classroom to mainstreamed EBD students.

In addition to the lack of information on mainstreamed EBD students there is also a lack of research on the use of self-management strategies with special populations in a general education class. McDougall (1998) researched 240 self-management studies and ended up with only 14 studies that target students with disabilities in a general education classroom. The lack of research on this topic makes it difficult to determine the true effectiveness of self-management programs in an inclusive classroom.

Implications for Future Research

The initial implication for future research is to conduct more research on this topic. Due to the absence of research on full inclusion scenarios for EBD students it is difficult to make an accurate conclusion on the effectiveness of teaching self-management strategies in the classroom. The research that was uncovered mostly explores the implementation of these strategies within a pullout program. More research

needs to be conducted in the mainstream setting to determine the overall effectiveness, maintenance, and generalization of self-management programs for EBD students.

Another viable implication is that more attention needs to be paid to teacher training. Every year more and more teachers are asked to support an EBD student within the classroom population. Teachers however do not receive specific training on how to teach and properly integrate EBD students into a classroom community. There is a myriad of research on the positive effect of self-management techniques for reducing disruptive behavior, however very few teachers receive training on specific techniques.

In addition, if teachers are to successfully integrate and meet the academic needs of EBD students, the effectiveness of mainstreaming should be another research topic. Is the least restrictive environment for an EBD student truly a full inclusion classroom? Further research should explore and determine the true meaning of least restrictive environment.

Overall Significance of the Literature

The overall significance of the literature is that teaching self-management techniques to EBD students can help increase the student's on-task behavior and academic performance. Secondly, the success of a program is dependent on teacher preparation. The research indicates that through proper implementation, EBD students learn how to recognize and target an inappropriate behavior and replace it with an appropriate one. Tying a self-evaluation component to the behavior modification process adds to the overall success of the management plan. Proper implementation of a program

and training of the teacher are the key factors in creating an effective self-management program for a student with EBD.

Case Study

Procedures

I interviewed five teachers who had direct instructional interaction with the same student who exhibits a behavior disorder. I spoke with the student's kindergarten, second grade, third grade, ELD (ELD) teacher, and one resource specialist. I spoke with each teacher and asked him or her to answer the same eight questions on audiotape (See Appendix A). The student's name is being kept confidential in the summary and he will be referred to as Chris.

Sample and Site

I gathered information by creating a purposive criterion sample consisting of three classroom teachers, one ELD teacher, and one resource specialist who have worked with Chris. These teachers all work for single elementary school district. Chris is a male, third grade student who has attended this school site since kindergarten.

Access and Permissions

I contacted the school principal to gain consent to conduct the study at the school site. I requested access to teachers and resource specialists with whom I planned to conduct audio taped interviews. After I received consent from my principal I contacted Chris' parent to request written permission to discuss the progress of her child's behavioral and academic history with his past and current teachers. Following the parent's permission I presented the faculty with whom I interviewed, with the consent

form, which briefly describes my topic and requested each teacher's signature to confirm his or her desire to participate.

After all necessary approvals and consent forms were completed, I began my interviews. Interviews were conducted in the teacher's classrooms, in a safe and private setting lasting no more than 30 minutes.

Data Gathering Strategies

I spoke with each teacher for 30 minutes and audio taped his or her response to eight interview questions. The teachers and I had a discussion about Chris' progress. The teachers were free at the end of the eight questions to add any pertinent information that he or she felt should be included in my knowledge base.

Data Analysis Approach

I conducted a non-experimental study with the interest of understanding the effectiveness of teaching self-management strategies to students with emotional and behavior disorders. I analyzed the data through the consensual qualitative research (CQR) approach. The findings of the interview fall into four domains, (a) Impact of behavior on student learning; (b) Referral and support plan; (c) Classroom impact of behavior plan; (d) Longitudinal Effect of Behavior Plan. These four sub categories are explored within the results and findings section.

Ethical Standards

This study adheres to Ethical Standards in Human Subjects Research of the American Psychological Association (Publication Manual of the American Psychological

Association, 2007. Additionally, the project was reviewed and approved by the Dominican University of California Institutional Review Board, number 5085.

Results or Findings

Description of Site, Individuals, and Data

The site is a kindergarten through fourth grade elementary school serving about seven hundred and fifty students. I conducted interviews with Chris' kindergarten teacher, second grade teacher, third grade teacher, ELD teacher, and one resource specialist. Each teacher or resource specialist was or is responsible for instructing Chris. Data was collected on audio taped in semi-structured interviews.

Analysis of Themes and/or Inferential Analysis

These six semi-structured interviews revealed five defining themes; (a) students behavior when entering each grade level, (b) impact of behavior on student learning, (c) referral process, (d) classroom impact of behavior plan, and (e) longitudinal effect of behavior plan. We discussed the teacher's view of Chris' behavior from the point at which he entered each teacher's room along with how he progressed both behaviorally and academically through the year. By speaking with each individual who had a direct impact on Chris' behavior I was able to take a deep look at the challenges and the successes that Chris has endured.

Student's Behavior Disorder

Chris arrived at kindergarten speaking only Spanish and exhibiting violent tantrums. Chris' kindergarten teacher on a scale of one to ten (one being in control and ten being a student unable to control their impulses) rated this student at a twelve. Chris screamed, yelled, and cried when he did not get his way in the class as well as throwing objects, ripping paper, and pushing other students on a daily basis. He had to be removed from the classroom several times by the vice principal due to fits of violence. Chris was not officially diagnosed with a classified disorder in kindergarten, as there was too little known about this five/six year old who did not speak any English. Chris left kindergarten with the administrations understanding that his behavior would be closely monitored in his first grade year.

Upon entering first grade Chris exhibited the same disgruntled behavior, often throwing violent tantrums when he did not get his way. From those working with Chris it was the impression of both administration and his teachers, that he was severely and emotionally disturbed. Throughout his first grade year Chris did not receive any official diagnosis other than that of a student exhibiting a behavior disorder. Through a series of behavior modifications the student moved onto second grade.

In second grade the teachers, administrators, and specialists put an emphasis on providing a well thought out and constructed plan for Chris. At the beginning of the year his second grade teacher rated his behavior at an eight. Chris still threw violent tantrums and his classmates often had to be removed from the room in order to adequately calm him down. A clear plan was put in place half way through Chris' second grade year. By

the end of the year his teacher rated him as a five on the behavior scale, indicating this his tantrums and disruptions had significantly decreased.

Upon entering Third Grade, Chris' teacher rated his behavior as a seven. He had some difficulty transitioning back into school after his summer break. Chris' lack of self-control was less than it had been at the end of second grade, but still much improved from that seen in first and second. Chris still has difficulty controlling his behavior in uncontrolled setting such as the playground, but had a significant decrease of tantrums in the classroom. Chris has a clearly articulated behavior plan for this academic year.

Currently, Chris is classified as exhibiting a behavior disorder in third grade, but is now working towards an individual learning plan goal of task completion. Chris is no longer exhibiting violent tendencies in the classroom. He has had some physical altercations on the play yard due to social issues not related to the classroom setting.

Impact of Behavior on Student learning

Chris entered kindergarten speaking only Spanish. He could not understand nor speak English. He constantly fought for the teacher's attention by throwing tantrums. When asked to try simple writing assignments or to follow directions, Chris would refuse by screaming, yelling, and destroying his work. Chris had a very difficult time learning during his kindergarten year due to his behavioral outbursts. He was able to acquire some letter sounds and some basic intercommunicative language, however his growth in writing and math were impeded by the poor behavior.

During 1st grade Chris' behavior interfered with reading, writing and pencil paper activities. At this point he was able to communicate with limited English. When Chris

was asked read or write he would refuse most of the time, stating that it was too hard. He would often rush to frustration quickly and begin yelling and disrupting the entire class. It was difficult for Chris to excel in his learning as he refused to do most of his work or practice different concepts.

Throughout second grade Chris continued to have difficulty completing written assignments mostly around journaling and literature response. Chris would refuse to do work and often cry, yell, and rip up his work. In the area of written expression Chris made little progress during his second grade academic year. By the end of second grade Chris tested out at a beginning of second grade level for writing and reading, but on grade level in mathematics.

Chris is currently in third grade. He has learned to take breaks when he is frustrated and a full behavior plan is in place. Chris occasionally has difficulty with writing assignments and reading activities but is now reading at grade level and he is able to write at a second grade level. With behavioral support and one-on-one attention he is able to do written and oral reports demonstrating adequate progress.

Referral and Support Plan

Chris entered kindergarten speaking no English. He threw violent, loud, and disruptive tantrums daily when he did not get his way. In light of the fact that Chris did not speak English nor did his parents he was not placed on school behavior plan but on an individual plan in his kindergarten classroom. His kindergarten teacher tried a multitude of strategies to improve his behavior. Chris' kindergarten teacher stated that he responded well to being useful, he liked to help out and do special jobs. Ignoring the tantrums also

led the length of tantrums to decrease. Creating tasks in which a non-English speaking student could be successful also helped to reduce Chris' disruptive behavior. His Kindergarten teacher also set him up to work with our ELD teacher on a weekly basis. The ELD teacher also spoke Spanish and was able to communicate on a common language level. In kindergarten Chris had no realization of how to control or monitor his own behavior.

Chris was deemed a disruptive behavior problem in first grade. Through the first Student Study Team (SST) meeting the first grade teacher was asked to keep notes on the frequency and severity of outbursts. If Chris threw a violent tantrum the first grade teacher was instructed to call the office resulting in Chris' classroom removal by the Vice Principal or appropriate resource staff. If Chris could go the day without throwing a tantrum he would get to go the Vice Principals office for a prize. Chris was also taught the self-management technique of taking time-outs. In the beginning of the year when he was still transitioning and the teacher saw Chris becoming agitated or angry the teacher would offer him a time-out on the bench outside allowing him to calm down and to come back when he was ready. By the end of first grade Chris was recognizing his own behavior and taking his time-outs on his own when he recognized that he was about to throw a fit or get upset.

During his kindergarten and into his first grade year Chris had also developed a relationship with the ELD teacher and was allowed to go to the ELD classroom when he had difficulty with an assignment and needed one on one support. In the beginning of the year the teacher would send Chris to the ELD classroom when he needed extra support. Chris also received reading support from a reading support specialist three days a week.

During his first grade year Chris was placed in a school counseling group called a friendship group to talk about his behavior and feelings in a positive way.

The first grade behavior system continued into his second grade year however he had regressed in his behavioral control over the summer and was not managing his tantrums as he had at the end of first grade. Chris was placed on a more structured behavior plan in January of his second grade year. If Chris threw tantrums he was removed from the room until he could calm down. He was placed on a ticket system. He was given tickets that he could give to his teacher at many any point when he wanted help with an assignment or felt that he need a break. The ticket allowed him to leave the class and visit learning center, where he could work with resource teachers or the ELD teacher on his assignments. He also had a folder of work that the learning center teachers created for him that was geared toward his English language development and vocabulary development. Then in February the SST team recommended that Chris be given Individual Learning Plan (IEP) status based on task completion. Under and IEP Chris could and was scheduled to attend the learning center four days a week and he could go to the learning center up to two hours a day if needed. The two hours a day was a self selected time by Chris that he could use when he knew he needed a break.

Chris' third grade plan is a continuation of the second grade plan. Chris has an open door policy with the learning center. He is allowed to go to the learning center whenever he needs extra support on a project or on an assignment. He receives prizes from the vice principal when he has a good week. He also has a sticker chart system in the ELD classroom. He receives 2 stickers per period if he completes his work. At the end of a work period Chris has a discussion with his ELD teacher to determine if he should

receive his stickers. Within this process Chris has learned to identify his on-task behavior. Chris receives a prize when he has a completely full chart.

Classroom Impact of Behavior Plan

Chris' on-task behavior and learning increased over the evolution of his behavior plan. Chris did not have any coping mechanisms in kindergarten or first grade. As a response to a difficult situation Chris would through violent and loud tantrums resulting in a lack of learning and a lack of on-task behavior. Through the evolution of his behavior plan Chris was able to take breaks when needed to calm his emotions and work on assignments. Chris is now reading at a third grade level and computing math facts at grade level.

This current system allows Chris the extra support he needs to complete assignments that he deems too difficult or that pose a problem for him do to his language development. Having the opportunity to work in a quiet and less competitive environment has also reduced Chris' anxiety that develops when he see his peers doing the same work without any difficulty.

Longitudinal Effect of Behavior Plan

In kindergarten Chris did not manage or recognize his poor behavior choices. Chris was oppositional, defiant, and did not complete his assignments. His behavior impacted his ability to learn and function in the classroom. By the end of kindergarten Chris was still oppositional to completing written assignments, but not on the same scale and he was speaking basic English.

Throughout first grade Chris was taught the negative consequences for throwing tantrums and the positive rewards of being on task. Chris was given the opportunity to take breaks when needed as well as given extra ELD support outside of the classroom and reading support three days a week. Chris was reading at the end of the first grade at a beginning first grade level and was able to write a one-sentence response to journal prompts. With frequent breaks he was also able to participate in all subject areas.

At the beginning of second grade Chris digressed in his behavior self-control and task completion. With an increase in academic goals and standards Chris found most tasks too difficult and reacted with outbursts and defiant behavior. The second grade teacher had to exit her class several times in response to the tantrums. After a behavior support plant was reinstated and modified Chris' ability to manage his own behavior increased. Chris was able to take breaks when needed and a goal of task completion was added to his behavior plan. By the end of second grade Chris had made adequate progress his English Language Development and Reading level, and writing ability to move on to third grade.

Chris is currently attending third grade. He is on a strict behavior plan. He and his classroom teacher have an understanding that if a task is too difficult to complete in class he has the choice to ask to go and work on it in the learning center. He receives a filled in balloon on his behavior chart if he is on task and working during an academic periods. Chris is now reading 116 words per minute at a third grade level and has good comprehension and recall after completing a story. Writing is still difficult for him however it was determined during several motor tests that Chris has poor visual motor

integration and poor visual memory, which makes it difficult to reproduce writing spontaneously and copy written work.

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

Self-management encompasses a variety of methods and strategies. The methods used with Chris include self-observation and self-evaluation of the target behavior. The target behavior included tantrums and fits. The tantrums and fits were and are being replaced by the choice to work in a less threatening and supportive environment. An increase in the desired target behavior has led to more on-task behaviors.

Through a modified behavior support plan Chris has improved academically on his goal of task completion and on his overall behavior. Chris is now able to complete teacher directed assignments without opposition and with appropriate support. Chris is capable of asking for help and discussing assignment modification in an appropriate way by asking to work in a smaller setting without using defiant or oppositional behavior.

Chris has become aware of his own behaviors and how to monitor his own emotions to create a more desirable outcome for himself and the class. With an increase in on-task behavior Chris has also seen a secondary effect of increased academic performance. Chris was below grade level in most subject areas from kindergarten through second grade, but is now beginning to meet grade level expectations for reading and mathematics.

Comparison of Findings/Results with Existing Studies

Current studies show that when a student is taught self-management strategies such as self-observation, self-recording, and self-evaluation, students can increase their on task behavior corresponding with the secondary effect of increasing academic achievement. The current studies however do not address the long-term effects of teaching students self-management strategies over an extended period of time. The subjects in the literature consist mostly of students who are being worked with in a pull out setting, which is not widely transferred into the classroom.

This case study not only reflects a long-term study of self-management techniques, but also targets a student who is in a mainstream classroom. The resource team and classroom teachers have collaborated on the self-management strategies being implemented with Chris. With the collaboration of the entire team this student has shown both on-task behavior increases and an increase in academic achievement in both pullout and mainstreamed settings.

Limitations of the Study

This case study only examines one student in a single school setting. Those who have worked with him consider Chris a success story and thus knowing I chose him as an example of how self-management strategies can and are used to help with students who exhibit emotional and behavior EBD disorders. This study does not analyze other EBD students of similar backgrounds or situations, but rather addresses the longitudinal effects of teaching self-management strategies to one EBD student.

Implications for Future Research

Self-management strategies can and are used to modify target behaviors in students with variety of disorders and disabilities. These techniques include, but are not limited to, self-observation, self-recording, self-evaluation, positive rewards systems, and choice based time-outs. An examination of Chris' progress from kindergarten to third grade exemplifies the effectiveness of teaching students self-management strategies to increase on task behavior. The study also reveals that a key component to any behavior modification program is a consistent behavior management plans that focuses on concrete transitions.

Another important implication that surfaced during the interviews was the lack of teacher training. Teachers are not being adequately trained to deal with and create behavior systems for emotional and behaviorally disturbed students. If Chris' teachers had been properly trained on the process of teaching self-management strategies then the process of changing Chris' target behavior could have occurred early in his education. An earlier intervention with smoother transitions could have resulted in a more consistent plan being formulated sooner than third grade.

Overall Significance of the Study

This study examines several implications in creating a behavior program for EBD students that also includes a self-management piece. There are three key components to changing a target behavior of a student who exhibits emotional and or behavior disorders. The first component is a clearly articulated behavior plans, which includes a self-management piece. The second component is teaching the student to use the chosen self-

management strategies(s). Lastly it is important to create smooth transitions for students who show behavior disorders from year to year.

These successful programs can and are currently being used to increase on-task behavior and academic performance in students whose behavior is often overwhelming and uncontrollable. This study is meant to extend the knowledge base for teachers that self-management strategies are core to integrating EBD student into mainstream classroom. With proper training teachers can learn to teach and integrate self-management strategies into their behavior plans for EBD students.

It is also important for future researches to recognize the lack of training for teachers, administrators, and parents in the implementation of behavior plans for EBD students. EBD students need consistent programs that provide a sequential message throughout their academic careers. Chris' success is representative of a team of highly educated teachers who worked together to create a plan that encompassed his needs. The process of creating behavior plans that include the component of self-management should be integral in teacher training programs to insure the success of mainstreaming EBD students.

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Appendix A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project: The Use of Self-Management Skills with Kindergarten Through Third Grade Students with Emotional and Behavior Disorders

Time: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

This project will provide teachers with a voice to express their perceptions towards impact of teaching self-management skills to students with behavior disorders. Each of these teachers has had experience with the same student. As a result each teacher will give insight into the increase of on-task behavior seen by this student over the course of his kindergarten through third grade experience.

Current research shows success in increased on-task behavior with students who have behavior disorders through the teaching of self-management techniques. The current research however only addresses small studies being conducted over short periods of time, not more than 6 months.

Providing your perspectives and observations on the effects of teaching self-management strategies to students with behavior disorders adds to the current research on integrating these students into the classroom.

Interview questions:

Teacher background

1. Please tell me how many years of teaching experience you have and what grade level you teach.

The Effectiveness of teachings self-management techniques to a student with behavior disorders

1. How would you rate Chris' on-task behavior when he entered your class at the beginning of the year?
2. Please describe how Chris' behavior impacted your class and his learning
3. What steps did you take to integrate Chris into your class, when you knew he had a behavior disorder?
4. At what point did outside help, in the form of an SST or, resource specialists become necessary?
5. What systems did you or the resources specialists put in place for Chris?
6. What impact did you see on Chris' on-task behavior after the aforementioned systems were put in place?
7. What if any additional benefits did you observe with Chris' behavior plan other than his on-task behavior?

